

I'iwi (Hawaiian Honeycreeper)

Scientific name: *Vestiaria coccinea*

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The scarlet I'iwi is one of the most beautiful birds in Hawaii. It uses its long beak to suck the nectar in native flowers and blossoms. It also feeds on insects and larvae.

An I'iwi will lay one to three eggs with dark brown markings. The eggs hatch after 14 days (2 weeks). The hatched birds have bright orange skin with soft head and wings. After three weeks, the bird will grow yellow green feathers and can fly. The red adult I'iwi will appear first on the breast, then head.

The I'iwi was valued by Hawaiians for its orange red feathers. Hawaiians used the feathers to make capes. These capes represented power. Bird catchers would go into the forest looking for trees with blossoms to bring hungry I'iwi. Sap was smeared on the branches of trees. An I'iwi that landed on the sap would be held fast in the sticky trap.

I'iwi are on most of the islands, however it is rare on the Islands of O'ahu and Moloka'i and no longer found on the Island of Lana'i. Another threat has been the spread of malaria. An I'iwi can be killed by one mosquito bite. From that bite, they could die in less than two weeks.